

Acreage Athletic League Sexual Abuse Prevention & Response Policy

1. Purpose

The **Acreage Athletic League** is committed to providing a safe environment for all athletes, free from abuse, misconduct, and harassment. This policy aims to prevent sexual abuse, educate participants, and establish procedures for reporting and responding to allegations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all coaches, volunteers, staff, officials, parents, and athletes involved in the league's activities.

3. Definitions

- **Sexual Abuse:** Any unwanted sexual contact or behavior, including but not limited to, sexual advances, inappropriate touching, exploitation, and coercion.
- **Grooming:** A process used by perpetrators to gain a child's trust and lower their defenses before abuse occurs.
- **Mandatory Reporters:** Individuals who are legally required to report suspected abuse (e.g., coaches, staff, volunteers).

4. Prevention Measures

- **Background Checks:** All coaches, volunteers, and staff must undergo a thorough background check before engaging with the league.
- **Training:** All adults in the program must complete annual training on recognizing, preventing, and reporting abuse.
- **Two-Adult Rule:** No adult should be alone with a minor. Practices, games, and meetings must have at least two approved adults present.
- **Locker Room & Travel Guidelines:**
 - No adult should enter a locker room alone with a minor.
 - Parents and additional staff should be present during team travel.
- **Social Media & Communication:** Direct one-on-one electronic communication between adults and minors is prohibited. All communication must include parents or guardians.

5. Reporting Procedures

- **Obligation to Report:** Any suspected abuse must be reported immediately. Reports can be made to the league's Sport President, directly to an Executive Board member and appropriate authorities.
- **Protection from Retaliation:** Anyone reporting in good faith is protected from retaliation.

6. Response & Investigation

- **Immediate Action:** Upon receiving a report, the accused individual will be suspended pending an investigation.
- **Law Enforcement Involvement:** If applicable, reports will be forwarded to local authorities.
- **Internal Review:** An internal investigation will be conducted following league protocols, ensuring confidentiality and fairness.
- **Disciplinary Measures:** If allegations are substantiated, disciplinary actions may include permanent suspension, legal action, or other appropriate consequences.

7. Parental Involvement & Education

- Parents will receive educational materials on recognizing and preventing abuse.
- Open discussions on safety will be encouraged at parent meetings.

8. Policy Review & Updates

- This policy will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure compliance with legal and best practice standards.

Print Name:

Date:

Signature:

Date